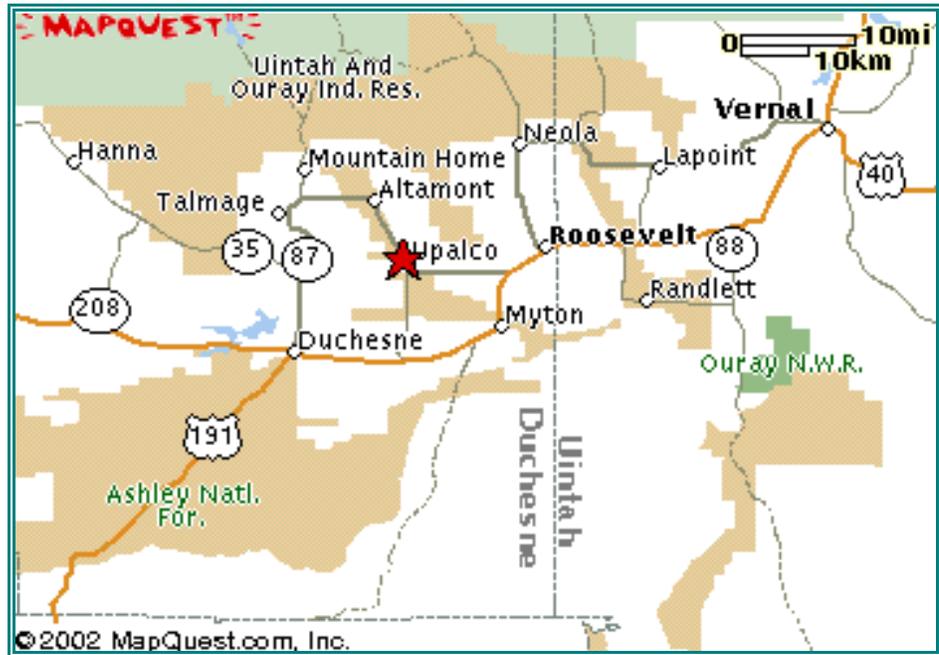


### First Home in Jensen

After their 1902 wedding, Fuller and Teen returned to their roots in eastern Utah. It is evident from the birth places of their 12 children that they lived in at least five locations: Jensen, Vernal, Lake Fork, Myton, and Upalco. This map shows most of those places, plus the Ouray Indian Reservation.



They lived the usual rough frontier life, no transportation other than horses and wagons, no electricity or running water. The sawed log cabin in this photo is finer than any at the time. Re-read grandma's description of housekeeping.



**Figure 2** <http://www.bbonline.com/tn/anderton/pbc2.jpg>

There were no industries or businesses that hired large numbers of people so Fuller had to do agricultural work, the only thing he knew. His short elementary education school didn't prepare him to do anything but work with his hands and back.

Grandma had 12 children, 11 of whom made it to adulthood, a remarkable thing for the time. Myrtle is the only one missing in this photo was taken when we went "stateside" from Seward in 1953 to spend the summer in Utah. So dad was



**Figure 3. Merrell parents and children 1953**

34 and mom was 30. From left to right starting in back they are: Carl, Leo, Harold, Ross, Delroy, Grant, Ray, (Front Row, Left to Right:) Marie, Mable, Grandpa, Grandma, Bessie, and Pearl. All were married, and all except Ray had

children. Karl, Harold, Ross and Ray were the obedient ones of the sons, but Grant was my favorite uncle. Mable was my favorite aunt. I knew Pearl fairly well but she was sort of detached so I didn't have a sense of her as anything but an aunt, though she was more familiar to me than Bessie was who lived in Canada. Of this bunch, only Harold, mom, Grant, Delroy and Ray are alive. Odd that the oldest survives along with the babies. He has long genes like grandma's family.

The photo on the next page was taken at the same time, probably in the Naples Ward chapel. It illustrates the fertility of this bunch. What fascinates me is not the numbers, rather the fact that the bulk of them still live in the region. Indeed, of grandpa's 35 acres is still occupied by his descendants, grand children and great-grandchildren. I can't even name most of these people - just the uncles and aunts and spouses, with a sprinkling of cousins my age. The last time I saw this clan back around 1984, they regarded me suspiciously, like I was an outsider.

When I was growing up in Naples and on the Vernal farm, Byron was one of my favorite cousins. I loved to spend time with him which I did often. Years later, I remember spending evenings with him at 2821 N after I got off my mission. He had just finished his tour of duty in Norway, I think, so was open to spending time with family. He'd come out for dinner and we'd tell stories and laugh. But at this 1984 family reunion things were fundamentally different and I don't really know why. But I do know what happened. Byron was some sort of city official by this time, and he was animatedly talking with another cousin or uncle about noise control.

Byron explained how berms built around baseball fields deflected noise up into the air and prevented it from radiating straight across the surrounding streets into homes. I stood and listened and he didn't pay much attention to me which was OK. There was no particular reason he should have specifically engaged me. At a point where I thought I sensed a lull in the conversation, I finally tried to enter into the conversation with a benign observation or question. At that instant, Byron suddenly and unexpectedly and with animation resumed his discourse. He didn't look at me, he didn't acknowledge me, yet I was standing right by him. It was as if I weren't there, as if I hadn't said a thing.

I don't know why that happened, but it hurt my feelings. It's embarrassing to be barred from any conversation after you try reasonably, so you think, to enter it, but it is painful to try this gambit with family members only to be rebuffed, not even given the benefit of a sneer. What's a man to do when rejected by his own

cousins. Not much. I was not rude, I said nothing unkind. I was just trying to be one of the cousins and engage in the conversation on the basis of a remembered, but obviously fictitious, shared memory. At several other points over those 3-4 days up on the mountains the same thing happened again. Byron was not alone.

I conclude that I had become a *persona non grata* to them. I, not they, had chosen to leave the region. That was apparently an unforgivable sin. Most of them remained within 15 miles of where they were born but I had been all over the world. Similarly, most of them had only finished high school and perhaps a year or so of formal education after high school. In contrast, I had gone so far as to declare that I was something else by completing a doctorate in linguistics and anthropology at Indiana University and so on. There was never an intention on my part to "put on airs" or to feel superior to them because I don't feel that way, but it didn't matter how I felt inside of me. In the end, I had become a foreigner to them. I no longer had any basis for calling on the bonds of familyhood that I had experienced in years before. Instead, I was an aberrant individual who had renounced his birthright and his claim to membership. So if you seek them out in a fit of familial familiarity, don't be too surprised if they are less than enthusiastic to see you. Or perhaps they'll forgive you paternal genes -or the trespasses of my mother and father if those are the underlying issue.

Anyway, after Fuller and Teen returned to Jensen, they built a sawed log cabin and lived in it for 5 years. I would like to know where it was in relationship to the Sunshine Ranch that Pearl lived on when I visited her years later. During those five years, Harold, Ross and Karl were born.



Figure 4. Part of the Merrell Clan in 1953

Then in 1907, the federal government decided it was time to steal more Indian land so they opened portions of the Ouray Indian Reservation to homesteading. Grandpa couldn't pass up such a good deal so away he went.